



Darlene Dunbar, MSW
Commissioner

DEPARTMENT of CHILDREN and FAMILIES
Making a Difference for Children, Families and Communities



M. Jodi Rell
Governor

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DCF Meets 17 Of 22 Goals – Highest Under Exit Plan
Six Measures Reach Top Performance To Date
And Three More Tie Top Performance

HARTFORD – The Department of Children and Families (DCF) met 17 of 22 goals measured in the third quarter of 2006 – two more goals than met last quarter and the most so far under the nearly three-year old Exit Plan, a report filed Monday with the federal court showed.

One goal for the appropriate discharge of youths who need adult services from the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services or the Department of Mental Retardation was met for the first time. Six performance measures reached their highest level and another three tied a previous high. The report also shows a steady climb in goals met. In the third quarter of 2004, the Department met four goals, and in the third quarter of 2005, the Department met nine goals.

Commissioner Darlene Dunbar, MSW, said that children and families are benefiting from the timely services provided by staff, including more timely permanency, worker visits, and more appropriate placement settings. Commissioner Dunbar said Governor Rell and the Legislature deserve credit for providing resources necessary to effect these improvements carried out by a dedicated and talented staff. The Commissioner stressed the recent report demonstrates that Department staff are consistently performing their jobs at unprecedented levels.

“The staff are achieving a measure of work we have never achieved before,” Commissioner Dunbar said. “And most important, staff are sustaining the success over time.”

Through 11 quarters of the Exit Plan, four goals have been met for ten or more quarters. Both goals relating to the timeliness of investigations have been met for eight consecutive quarters and reached their highest level of performance or tied a previous high. Five other goals have been met for four or five consecutive quarters. Taken together, measures for timely permanency – which includes reunification, adoption, and transfer of guardianship – have been met in two-thirds of the time overall during the last five quarters. Importantly, a goal met for the first time last quarter, reducing reliance on residential placements, was met again this quarter.

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Commissioner Dunbar said staff have made improved performance a routine part of their work and that as goals are met, the staff demonstrates the capacity to focus on meeting other goals that so far have not been met – including very important goals for treatment planning and meeting children’s needs.

“New areas will always be identified where we want to improve performance,” Commissioner Dunbar added. “But our staff possess a continued ability to focus their work and then boost the quality of services we provide to children and families.”

This quarterly report shows DCF staff met the following outcomes:

- Commencement Of Investigations: The goal of 90 percent was exceeded for the eighth quarter in a row with a current achievement of 98.7 percent, the highest since measurement began for the Exit Plan in the Fourth Quarter of 2004.
- Completion Of Investigations: Workers completed investigations in a timely manner in 94.2 percent of cases, exceeding the goal of 85 percent for the eighth consecutive quarter.
- Search For Relatives: For the fourth consecutive quarter, staff achieved the 85 percent goal for relative searches and met this requirement for 93.1 percent of children.
- Maltreatment Of Children In Out-of-Home Care: The Department sustained achievement of the goal of 2 percent or less for the 11th consecutive quarter with an actual measure of 0.7 percent.
- Timely Reunification: For the fifth consecutive quarter, this measure exceeded the 60 percent goal with a mark of 62.5 percent.
- Transfer of Guardianship: For the third time in the last six quarters, the Department met the 70 percent goal with a measure of 70.2 percent.
- Re-entry Into Care: For the second quarter of the last three, the Department exceeded the 7 percent goal with a measure of 4.3 percent, the best performance under the Exit Plan.
- Multiple Placements: For the tenth consecutive quarter, staff exceeded the 85 percent goal with a rate of 96.8 percent, the highest recorded under the Exit Plan.
- Foster Parent Training: For the tenth consecutive quarter, the Department met the 100 percent goal.
- Placement Within Licensed Capacity: For the second of the last four quarters, staff met the 96 percent goal by reaching an actual measure of 96.6 percent.
- Worker-To-Child Visitation In Out Of Home Cases: For the fourth consecutive quarter, the Department met the 85 percent goal for maintaining regular visits by meeting requirements in 92.5 percent of out of home cases, the highest level reached under the Exit Plan.
- Worker To Child Visitation In In-Home Cases: For the fourth consecutive quarter, workers exceeded the 85 percent standard by making required visitation in 85.7 percent of cases. The percent of in-home cases where visitation standards were met has more than doubled since the Exit Plan measures began at the start of 2004.
- Caseload Standards: For the tenth consecutive quarter, no Department social worker carried more cases than the standard under the Exit Plan.
- Reduction In Residential Care: For the second consecutive quarter, staff met the goal of having no more than 11 percent of children in DCF care in a residential placement with an achievement of 10.9 percent. As of November 21, 2006, there were 225 fewer children in residential care than in April 2004 – a reduction of 25.3 percent.
- Discharge Measures: For the fifth consecutive quarter, staff met the 85 percent goal for ensuring children discharged at age 18 from state care had attained either educational and/or employment goals by achieving a 100 percent measure, the highest ever under the Exit Plan.

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- Discharge to DMHAS And DMR: For the first time, staff met the 100 percent goal for appropriately discharging youths who need mental health or mental retardation services.
- Multi-disciplinary Exams: For the third consecutive quarter, Department staff met the 85 percent goal by ensuring that 86 percent of children entering care received a timely multi-disciplinary exam.

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